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ORANGE & WHITE

■ **Inside**

Basketball tips-off this
week **22**

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Celebrating 35 years covering Clemson Athletics

*Clemson Wins
Homecoming
Game Over
Maryland, 45-10*



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ORANGE & WHITE

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Had Robert Nkemdiche listened to Dabo Swinney in the first place, he could have saved himself quite a bit of anguish.

He would have also cost every recruiting website in America a jillion hits.

Nkemdiche's media-fed recruiting saga took a turn toward sanity last week when the nation's No. 1 prospect de-committed from Clemson and reopened his recruiting.

As 'news' it was a non-event.

Nkemdiche was already planning to take his five official visits; he was, and is, deeply undecided between playing with his brother, Denzel, at Ole Miss, or with his friends, David Kamara, Wayne Gallman and Nick Schuessler, at Clemson.

If Nkemdiche had listened to Swinney, he'd have delayed his commitment decision.

Swinney, as a rule, discourages early commitments unless the players are staunchly and irrevocably ... well, committed.

Nkemdiche was, undoubtedly, as 'committed' as a 17-year-old with all the options in the world could possibly be when he informed Swinney of his decision during a visit to campus last summer.

The young man had no idea what he was getting into.

From the get-go, there was an air of disbelief in certain SEC-oriented media circles that the nation's premier defensive end would even consider going anywhere other than Alabama or LSU or Florida or Georgia. For the past three-plus months, Nkemdiche's every move and thought has been dogged by questions about the strength, and sincerity, of his commitment.

Nkemdiche didn't create this circus — he just stepped

into the center ring.

He's been aboveboard with Clemson's coaches as the saga has unfolded, and that's what separates his situation from others in which the Tiger coaching staff has cut ties with committed prospects when they've chosen to visit elsewhere.

He may well end up at Clemson, yet. His mother's wishes cannot be dismissed, but it's just as likely that when push comes to shove, he'll get the opportunity to make his own decision.

It just hasn't been made yet.

He's once again, in the official jargon of the recruiting game, 'uncommitted' — as well he should be.

**THIRD DOWN BELONGS
TO THE TIGERS**

That's the way it was on Saturday against Maryland, and that's the way it's been for most of the season.

On both sides of the line of scrimmage.

The ability of Clemson's offense to move the chains, sustain possession and make big plays on third down has become a staple of Chad Morris' offense.

A year ago, the Tigers converted 94 of 217 third-down plays — for a better-than-respectable 43.3 percent.

This year the Tigers have blown that benchmark away by converting 83 of 156 third-down plays, 53.2 percent.

Before making wholesale second-half substitutions, the Tigers converted six of their first eight tries against Maryland, which at the time boosted their season mark to 83 of 150, 55.3 percent.

Those numbers only tell part of the story.

The Tigers are also leading the ACC in fourth-down conversions with 11-of-13 — 84.6 percent — after going 3-for-3 Saturday against the

2012 Football Schedule

date	opponent	kickoff/result
Sept. 1	vs Auburn	W, 26-19
Sept. 8	BALL STATE	W, 52-27
Sept. 15	FURMAN	W, 41-7
Sept. 22	@ Florida St	L, 49-37
Sept. 29	@ Boston College	W, 45-31
Oct. 6	GEORGIA TECH	W, 47-31
Oct. 20	VIRGINIA TECH	W, 38-17
Oct. 25	@ Wake Forest	W, 42-13
Nov. 3	@ Duke	W, 56-20
Nov. 10	MARYLAND	W, 45-10
Nov. 17	N.C. STATE	3:30
Nov. 24	SOUTH CAROLINA	

IPTAY Day

Solid Orange Day

Terps.

The real, possession-extending impact of Clemson's work on third and fourth down is remarkable.

On the 156 occasions that Clemson has faced a third-down situation this season, the Tigers have extended their drive, or scored, 94 times. That comes out to a 60.3 percent success rate.

Winning third and fourth-down matchups has become the foundation of Clemson's record-breaking offense.

"Last year on third-and-one, you'd hear everyone in the stands hold their breath, 'Oh, God, it's third and one,'" said Dabo Swinney on Saturday. "Heck, us down on the sidelines were holding our breath, 'Oh, God, it's

third and one.'

"But you look at how our team has improved. They're like, fourth and 8, let's go for it, they don't even hesitate. We trust our players and they've earned that."

On the defensive side of the ball, the Tigers' have posted winning numbers all season. Even when busts, breakdowns and problems stopping the run were allowing opponents to pile up big yardage totals, Clemson was doing a decent or better job of getting opposing offenses off the field.

The Tigers capped it by limiting Maryland to 1-of-13 third-down conversions on Saturday. Clemson's season total now stands at 46-of-146, 31 percent.

- Kerry Capps

PHOTO BY MARK CRAMMER

Clemson defensive end Corey Crawford returns a fumble recovery 16 yards for a touchdown in the first quarter of the Tigers' homecoming win over Maryland last Saturday.

**On the
Cover**

» FOOTBALL «



MARK CRAMMER

When Clemson scored - Adam Humphries' 13-yard touchdown catch (above) and Corey Crawford's 16-yard fumble recovery (left) - only 12 seconds apart in the first quarter, it was the fewest seconds between touchdowns in school history breaking the old record by two seconds.

45-10 Homecoming win over Maryland sets new home streak

By Greg Wallace

It has become routine. Humdrum. Excited with machine-like precision.

Each week, a focused Clemson team faces an opponent that isn't prepared for its talented, fast-paced offense and an ever-improving defense.

The Tigers score lots of points. They win. Thousands of orange-clad fans file out happy. Rinse, wash, repeat.

That familiar scene unfolded again here Saturday against a beat-up Maryland team. No. 10 Clemson jumped out early, showed no mercy and rolled to a 45-10 whipping of the Terrapins before 76,000 fans.

It was Clemson's 12th consecutive home victory, setting a program record. Clemson improved to 9-1, 6-1 in ACC play; the Terrapins fell to 4-6, 2-4. The Tigers have won six consecutive games by at least 14 points, and three by at least 29.

"The thing we challenge our guys about all the time — you look around college football boxes, see the games and say, 'Dadgum, how'd that happen?'" Clemson

coach Dabo Swinney said.

"Guys lose focus and don't come ready to play. Our guys have done a tremendous job every single week coming ready to play. Today from the opening snap, they left no doubt."

It has been three years and 334 days since Swinney became the program's full-time head coach. His process of program-building is bearing real fruit, he said.

"There've been a lot of good Clemson teams over the past 117 years, but never one that's won 12 in a row at home," he said. "Guys have bought in. We wanted to change Clemson from the inside out and it starts with winning at home. To set the record is special. Players deserve all the credit. Once they put the work in to buy into it, they've produced some great goals."

Junior quarterback Tajh Boyd completed 18 of 26 passes for 261 yards and three touchdowns, an efficient day despite two lost fumbles. He agreed with Swinney's sentiment.

"I think it's a tremendous accomplishment," he said. "There's been a foundation laid the last two seasons. Since coach

Swinney got here it's been steadily, continuously getting better."

Maryland entered the game with the nation's No. 11 total defense; Clemson's 45 points were a season high for a Terps' opponent. The Tigers outgained Maryland 436-180 and had 27 first downs to the Terps' 10, despite holding the ball for only 28:03. "There's always more room for improvement," Boyd said. "I know we keep saying that every week, but it drives us to go out there and score every drive. There's not too many people that really stop us. We just stop ourselves sometimes."

A steadily improving defense put up its best yardage and point totals of the season. In fact, Maryland's 180 yards of offense were the lowest by a Clemson foe since Oct. 31, 2009 vs. Coastal Carolina.

"The schemes that coach Venables and our staff are putting together for us to make plays, just putting up the scheme and we're going out and executing," said sophomore defensive end Corey Crawford. "Every week, (our confidence) has gone up. We know we can play with any team we line up against. We have to be-

lieve in ourselves. It took us for a while to get that going, but since we got it going we've been pushing ever since."

The Terrapins played with their fifth quarterback of the season — four have suffered season-ending injuries, including three ACL tears. The Terps' leading rusher and receiver — Wes Brown and Stefon Diggs — each missed the game with ankle injuries.

Clemson wasted no time jumping all over the wounded Terrapins. Following an exchange of punts, the Tigers put together an efficient seven-play, 52-yard drive, capped by Adam Humphries' first career touchdown, a diving 13-yard grab in the back of the end zone with 7:19 left in the first quarter.

Maryland quarterback Shawn Petty — a converted linebacker — made a critical error on the next snap. As he dropped back to pass, the ball slipped out of his hands, and Crawford scooped it up, going 16 yards for a touchdown.

12 seconds elapsed between scores, the shortest span in Clemson history.

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE >

» FOOTBALL «



MARK CRAMMER

Offensive lineman Brandon Thomas, left, and DeAndre Hopkins celebrate after Hopkins' 28-yard touchdown reception in the first quarter.

< FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Following another Maryland three-and-out, the Tigers put the hammer down. Boyd converted a pair of third downs, and lofted a nice strike to Hopkins in the left corner of the end zone for a 28-yard touchdown and 21-0 lead with 2:42 left in the first quarter.

Clemson's defense forced another three-and-out, and the rout was on: a screen pass to Sammy Watkins, Boyd 10-yard scramble and slide and a 22-yard touchdown to Brandon Ford down the left sideline, giving the Tigers a 28-0 lead with 13:56 left in the half.

Tiger mistakes were Maryland's best offense: Humphries muffed a punt at his own 18, and Petty cashed in, throwing a 17-yard touchdown to Devonte Campbell,

putting the Terps on the board with 11:08 left in the half.

Boyd was also stripped at the Maryland 2; the Tigers had three lost fumbles in the half.

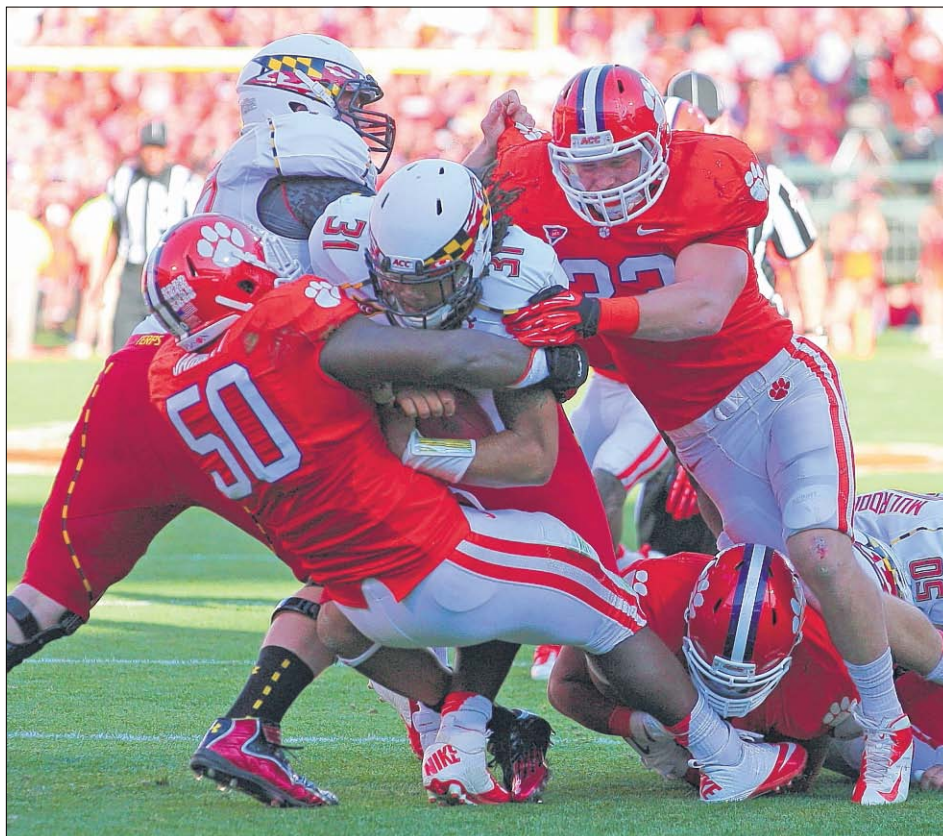
It didn't matter. Boyd guided another impressive drive to end the half, covering 66 yards in nine plays, with tailback Andre Ellington rumbling six yards for a touchdown and 35-7 lead with 1:30 left in the half.

Ho-hum. Just another happy day in Death Valley.

"I told our team it's time to start separating from the pack," Swinney said.

"Put the hammer down. This is when great teams start separating. Last year we weren't a top-10 team. We did good things, but we proved that in November.

"Now we have an opportunity to be a top-10 team."



MARK CRAMMER

Defensive tackle Grady Jarrett (50) and linebacker Spencer Shuey combine to tackle Maryland quarterback Shawn Petty in the first half.

'No letup' for defensive play

By Greg Wallace

While Clemson's pyrotechnic-friendly offense gets most of the headlines, the Tigers' defense has steadily improved over the last month.

Saturday, they took another big step against a beat-up Maryland team. The Terrapins managed just 10 points and 180 yards of total offense. It was the Tigers' lowest point total of the season, and lowest yardage total since holding Coastal Carolina to 179 on Halloween 2009.

Maryland played without its top four quarterbacks; freshman quarterback Shawn Petty, a converted linebacker, completed six of 12 passes for 41 yards with two lost fumbles. The Terps were also without their top receiver (freshman Stefon Diggs) and tailback (Wes Brown), who missed the game with ankle injuries.

"No letup," said sophomore defensive end Corey Crawford.

"I feel sorry for what they got going on, but as coach (Dabo) Swinney said, that's their problem."

Crawford got the Tigers' first fumble return score in over a year, scooping a Petty fumble and rolling 16 yards for a touchdown.

"I just saw it was in open space, picked I up and ran with it," he said. "That's what they tell us, if the ball is in open space and it's around, by all means scoop it and score."

The Tigers held Maryland to 1-of-13 third down conversions, a huge piece of their success, Swinney said.

"Last year on third and 1, you'd hear everyone in the stands hold their breath, 'Oh, God, it's third and one,'" Swinney said.

"Heck, us down on the sidelines were holding our breath, 'Oh, God, it's third and one.' But you look at how our team has improved. They're like, fourth and 8, let's go for it, they don't even hesitate. We trust our players and they've earned that."

» FOOTBALL «



MARK CRAMMER

Turning Point...

By Kerry Capps

Ball security, from the start, was one of Maryland's biggest concerns.

Depleted of playmakers, without an effective passer on its roster, the Terps needed to run the football, keep the football, secure the football, and not give away anything cheap, especially early in the game.

The game started well-enough for the Terps.

The Tigers took the opening kickoff (for the ninth time in 10 games), picked up a quick first down, but then stalled — Tajh Boyd was dropped for a loss on a second-down play, and then missed a third-down pass for DeAndre Hopkins.

The Terps caught a bad-bounce on Clemson's punt, which rolled dead at the two. But a pair of handoffs netted four yards, and fill-in, fifth-team quarterback scooted for 10 yards on third-and-six. Maryland's

possession ended with back-to-back tackles for loss by Grady Jarrett and Travis Blanks.

Clemson cashed in on its second possession with a seven-play, 52-yard touchdown drive, capping by Adam Humphries' diving catch in the end zone — the first TD reception of his career.

Then disaster struck for the Terps.

On Maryland's first-down play from the 25 after the kickoff, Petty rolled to his left, looking to pass under pressure, cocked his arm and lost the football. Defensive end Corey Crawford reversed field, scooped up the ball, and sprinted 16 yards to the end zone.

Maryland turned the ball over again later in the first quarter, and the Tigers cashed in again with a 28-yard touchdown pass from Boyd to Hopkins.

Clemson led 21-0, and had plenty of pad to overcome some sloppy play en route to its 45-10 victory.

DeAndre Hopkins falls in the corner of the end zone after catching a 28-yard touchdown pass in the first quarter. It was Hopkins' 14th touchdown reception so far this year.

ATLANTIC COAST CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	Conference				All Games			
	W	L	PF	PA	W	L	PF	PA
Florida St.	6	1	277	110	9	1	431	130
Clemson	6	1	310	171	9	1	429	224
NC State	3	3	152	160	6	4	266	223
Wake Forest	3	5	132	235	5	5	201	289
Maryland	2	4	104	152	4	6	189	240
Boston College	1	5	121	219	2	7	199	278
Boston College	1	5	121	219	2	7	199	278

Coastal Division

	Conference				All Games			
	W	L	PF	PA	W	L	PF	PA
Georgia Tech	4	3	278	209	5	5	382	302
Miami	4	3	231	209	5	5	285	312
Duke	3	3	156	219	6	4	307	326
North Carolina	3	3	216	212	6	4	405	257
Virginia Tech	2	4	146	181	4	6	266	250
Virginia	2	4	141	187	4	6	246	293

Boxscore

NO. 10 CLEMSON 45
MARYLAND 10

Maryland 0 7 3 0 — 10
Clemson 21 14 3 7 — 45

First Quarter

Clem—Humphries 13 pass from Boyd (Catanzaro kick), 7:19.

Clem—Crawford 16 fumble return (Catanzaro kick), 7:07.

Clem—Hopkins 28 pass from Boyd (Catanzaro kick), 2:42.

Second Quarter

Clem—Ford 22 pass from Boyd (Catanzaro kick), 13:56.

Md—Campbell 17 pass from Petty (Craddock kick), 11:08.

Clem—Ellington 6 run (Catanzaro kick), 1:30.

Third Quarter

Clem—FG Catanzaro 22, 11:14.

Md—FG Craddock 39, 3:24.

Fourth Quarter

Clem—Seckinger 4 pass from Stoudt (Symmes kick), 11:38.

A—76,000.

	Md	Clem
First downs	10	27
Rushes-yards	43-139	42-135
Passing	41	301
Comp-Att-Int	6-12-0	23-34-0
Return Yards	0	25
Punts-Avg.	7-37.0	3-37.7
Fumbles-Lost	4-3	3-3
Penalties-Yards	3-27	1-5
Time	31:57	28:03

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—Maryland, B.Ross 16-100, Reid 6-24, Cierski 3-10, Jacobs 1-3, Petty 16-2, Pickett 1-0. Clemson, Ellington 13-55, McDowell 11-51, Johnson 4-14, Boyd 6-13, Stoudt 3-5, Brooks 1-1, Davidson 1-(minus 1), Howard 2-(minus 1), S.Watkins 1-(minus 2).

PASSING—Maryland, Petty 6-12-0-41. Clemson, Boyd 18-26-0-261, Stoudt 5-8-0-40.

RECEIVING—Maryland, Jacobs 4-17, Campbell 2-24. Clemson, Humphries 5-41, S.Watkins 4-60, Hopkins 4-59, Peake 3-24, Bryant 2-59, Ford 2-46, Cooper 1-7, Seckinger 1-4, Ja.Brown 1-1.

» FOOTBALL «



MARK CRAMMER

Chad Morris said that quarterback Tajh Boyd, above, had a 'good game.' Running back Andre Ellington, right, scores a touchdown in the second quarter on a six-yard burst up the middle.

Coordinator Wrap-up: Offense

By Greg Wallace

Just another day at the office for Chad Morris' hurry-up, no-huddle offense. Saturday, Clemson piled up 45 points against the nation's No. 11 total defense, hammering Maryland early and often for a 45-10 victory. I

It was the Tigers' ninth consecutive game with at least 37 points, an ACC record, and sixth consecutive victory of 14-plus points.

And it could have been worse for Maryland. Much worse.

Junior quarterback Tajh Boyd lost a pair of fumbles, one at the Terrapins' 2-yard line, and Morris admitted he took his foot off the gas in the second half, simply because he could.

With two weeks left in the regular season, the fast-paced system is rolling right along. Morris discussed his day, Boyd's effort, and even "happiness camp" with reporters afterward.

ON THE OFFENSE OVERALL

"I thought we did well. I thought we executed well at times. We've got to improve on the turnovers. We've been just about perfect in the red zone, and today we laid one on the ground. Those are things you've got to clear up. Great opportunity. Those guys came through today. We've got 14 days left, and that's what it's about, staying focused over the next 14 days."

ON PLAYING WELL AGAINST A GOOD DEFENSE

"You're talking about a top-10 defense in the country right there, and I thought they played really well. I thought there were a couple of times where I thought we could have been a little more physical up front. As the game went on we got stronger and stronger against that defensive line, and that was good to see. We knew going against a defense of that caliber, they were going to try and put some pressure on us, so that was good to see."

FUMBLES ONLY MAJOR CONCERN

"Without looking at film, I'm sure there's going to be a lot of other concerns that I have. And as we do each week. The turnovers, we've got to improve on that. The first (Boyd fumble), he missed a read, laid it on the ground. The second one, the guy hit him pretty hard. But he's got to do a good job in the red zone area. You can't be spinning, you've got to get down. Do what you can and get down."

ON BOYD OVERALL

"I thought Tajh had a good game. You compare it to the last two weeks where he throws five touchdowns in the first half, I think we'd all say, man. We were close, we had three. Obviously the turnovers. But he's executing at a high level, he's operat-

ing this system and offense at a high level. Anytime you do that, you're going to be excited about that."

ON RUNNING THE PLAYS YOU WANT

"It's all about the way the game goes. You've got a great game plan, you look at your game plan, everything's planned out. Then you go in, and the score at the end of the first quarter may change your game plan a little bit. Some things you worked all week, you wanted to show, you don't show because you don't have to. You try to stay simpler, and give guys good execution, just make sure you hit on the fundamentals."

DID YOU KEEP IT SIMPLE TODAY

"Oh yeah, extremely simple. The second half was an extremely simple game plan for us, just trying to get some guys some good reps. Create more depth. Anytime you can do that late in the season, you're doing good things."

ON FIXING THE RUN GAME STRUGGLES EARLY

"I think a lot of that had to do with them. We knew they were really good up front. Big and physical. I think our guys did a good job. Our tempo wore them down and it allowed us to run the football."

ON N.C. STATE

"You look at North Carolina State and that's our next opponent. And these guys, we went up there last year and I thought we played as poorly as we had all year long. And that's something we've talked about, already. That's something we've got to handle ourselves. We've got to play with a great passion, we've got to keep it going. It doesn't matter who we play, it's about us at this point in time. We've got to keep pushing each other and holding each other accountable. That's what's going to get you through the next 14 days."

ON HOW THE OFFENSIVE SUCCESS STEMS FROM BOYD'S SUCCESS

"He's confident. He's confident in what he's doing. Confident in the system, and I think it carries over. When you see that, you see guys having fun. They have fun, coaches have fun. You're coaching them hard, and it's not happiness camp out there. We don't operate happiness camp. But we do have fun out there. The guys are executing the system and doing it at a high level."

» FOOTBALL «



MARK CRAMMER

Tight end Stanton Seckinger catches a four-yard touchdown pass in the second half.

Honor Roll...

By Kerry Capps

DeAndre Hopkins: He came up short of the 82 yards he needed to break Aaron Kelly's school reception yardage record, but extended his streak of consecutive games with a TD catch to seven — a Clemson record — and added to his record total for career touchdown receptions 23. He finished with four catches for 59 yards — all in the first half.

Corey Crawford: He spent too much time in Maryland's backfield for the Terps to have a chance to keep their offense moving.

Sammy Watkins: He was a step away from breaking a long return on the opening kickoff, and had four first-half receptions for 60 yards. He sat out the second half with a leg injury.

Adam Humphries: His first-quarter end zone dive resulted in the first touchdown catch of his career.

Tajh Boyd: Another solid day's work — 18-of-26, 261 yards and three touchdowns, a performance marred only by two lost fumbles.

Andre Ellington: Tough running against one of the ACC's strongest and quickest defensive fronts — 13 carries for 55 yards and a touchdown.

Stanton Seckinger: Like Adam Humphries, he had his first touchdown reception — a four-yard strike from Cole Stoudt.

Brandon Ford: He showed great concentration in hauling in a 22-yard touchdown pass that slipped through the hands of a Maryland defender.

Stephone Anthony: He started, shared time with Spencer Shuey, and led the Tigers in tackles with seven, including one in the backfield.

Grady Jarrett: He exerted consistent pressure in the middle and had two tackles for loss.

Spencer Shuey: In tandem with Anthony, he's made the middle linebacker spot one of Clemson's defensive strengths.

Travis Blanks: He had six tackles, including one for loss.

Cortez Davis: He's growing in confidence and competence, adding depth to the Tigers' secondary. He had a career-best five tackles against the Terps.

Malliciah Goodman: He had a sack, a forced fumble and a fumble recovery, all wrapped up in one.

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» FOOTBALL «

NOTEBOOK

* Clemson established the school record for consecutive wins at Memorial Stadium (71st season this year). The Tigers have now won 12 in a row at home. The previous mark was 11 in a row from 1989-91. The victory also tied the school record for consecutive home wins regardless of home site. Clemson won 12 in a row from 1927-30 at Riggs Field.

* Clemson has a 9-1 record to start the season for the second consecutive season.

* Next week, Clemson will have a chance to reach 10 wins in the regular season for the first time since the 1981 season. In each of Clemson's last four 10-win seasons the 10th win came in a bowl game.

* Clemson's senior class has 34 wins (34-17), the most for a four-year class since 1992.

* Clemson received the opening kickoff for the ninth time in 10 games this season. The only game the Tigers didn't receive the opening kickoff was against Furman.

* Clemson scored 35 points in the first half for third straight game, a first in school history.

* When Clemson scored 12 seconds apart in the first quarter, it was the fewest seconds between touchdowns in school history. The previous record was 14 seconds against Duke in 2003, both on touchdowns by Derrick Hamilton.

* The Tigers had not allowed the opposing team to score nine straight times following a turnover by Clemson before Maryland scored off a muffed punt in the second quarter. The Tigers have allowed just 24 points off turnovers this season.

* Clemson's defense held Maryland to just 180 yards of total offense in tonight's game. That is the fewest yards of total offense allowed by Clemson since October 31, 2009 when the Tigers held Coastal Carolina to 170 yards. It is also the fewest yards by an ACC team since 2009 when Clemson held Wake Forest to 178 yards of total offense.

* Clemson held Maryland to just 1-for-13 on third-down conversions in today's game. That is the fewest third-down conversions for an opponent since September 19, 2009 when Clemson held Boston College to 1-for-12 on third-down conversions.

* Clemson had three lost fumbles in the first half of today's game. Entering today, Clemson had lost just two fumbles all season and was second in the nation in that category.



Defensive back Travis Blanks (11) had six tackles for the Tigers including one for loss.

MARK CRAMMER

Coordinator Wrap-up: Defense

By Greg Wallace

Slowly but surely, Brent Venables' first Clemson defense is improving. Facing a Maryland team on its fifth quarterback of the season Saturday, the Tigers clamped down in a 45-10 win. The Terrapins' 180 yards of total offense and 10 points were both season-bests for the defense, with Maryland's yardage the lowest by a Clemson foe since Coastal Carolina had 179 on Oct. 31, 2009.

They'll be more severely tested in the next two weeks against N.C. State and South Carolina, but Venables' group is showing a clear trend of improvement. Venables discussed Corey Crawford's fumble return score, improvement and more with reporters afterward:

ON THE FUMBLE RETURN TD

"I think it was a table-setter, obvi-

ously. Let's face it, they have some limitations, they're going through some issues, but all that aside, just our positioning, our physicality, the aggression we played with against a very physical, focused team they brought out there. We talked all week about really focusing in on us more than anything else. That was a sign of maturation, leadership, and guys being hungry. Not being satisfied."

ON IMPROVEMENT OVER THE LAST MONTH

"Sometimes yards and points are indicative of that, sometimes they're not. I feel like you might have seen, we are getting a little bit better, week in and week out. Maryland had limitations, so we stressed certain areas. We will be (more tested) in the next couple weeks. I reward the guys for a good solid effort and getting to play another week."

ON THE IMPROVED DEFENSIVE LINE PRESSURE

"Marion (Hobby) does a great job with those guys. They're becoming more and more productive and disruptive. They're getting good pad level and they understand their responsibilities. They're making plays and it's showing up in the stats, and I think that's indicative of improvement. They're working hard, they're out there early at every practice working on the little things. They understand football."

ON SPENCER SHUEY'S PLAY

"He's an instinctive guy. A good tackler. He understand what we're trying to do. He really has an understanding of offenses and formations and just does a great job of managing our defense from the middle linebacker spot. That's the way it should be if you're any good. I'm happy for him and proud of him."

» FOOTBALL «

MARK CRAMMER

Swinney, right, greets
linebacker Marcus Bullard
as he runs on the field
before the game. Far right,
Swinney reacts to a no-call
in the second half.



In Dabo's Words...

"There's no doubt we came ready to play. We were ready from the opening snap. Our players are excited to play every week because we practice the right way. I'm proud of our backups, because they showed our depth and took care of business."

"We are a very focused program and we've had great leadership all season. This group of Tiger is our most consistent ever at home, with 12 consecutive home runs. It all starts with how we practice."

ON THE TIGERS' PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE TERPS

"We played well today. We got Andre (Ellington) good plays, and Sammy (Watkins) was solid. And I'm proud of our young guys getting opportunities."

ON CLEMSON'S VETERANS STEPPING UP ON DEFENSE

"They are a product of experience. They're not losing focus and they're learning. They are an easy group to keep focused. We want to play with a hard edge and when we make mistakes, we always feel like someone will step up and make a play."

ON THE TIGERS' REMAINING TWO HOME GAMES

"I've told my team that is the time when top-10 teams separate themselves from the pack. The end of November is when it matters. We need to play our best football down the stretch."

"It's a daily commitment to continue

consistency. We've been lucky to have guys stay healthy, but even when players get injured, we can count on the rest of the team to step up."

MARYLAND'S RANDY EDSALL

"Give Clemson credit. That's an outstanding football team that we played against today. They're very, very talented on both sides of the ball. You can see why they're ranked as high as they are, and they're very deserving on that ranking."

"When you take a look at what happened today, we couldn't get off the field on third down at times today. Against those guys, you have to be able to do that. Early in the game, we didn't get off the field."

"Offensively, you just can't turn the ball over three times and give one up for seven points. Of 21 points in the first half, 14 came off turnovers, I believe. You just can't do that against a top ten team in the country."

"We'll just go back and look at the film and work to get better and make the corrections and move forward. I thought that Brandon Ross had a good day. I thought he ran hard. I thought he showed something. We just have to go back to work tomorrow and get better."

ON THE TERPS' GAME PLAN AGAINST CLEMSON'S OFFENSE:

"One of the things that we wanted to do as we came into the game was make them go the long way and try not to give up the big plays. We gave up a couple too

many big plays when we didn't use good eye discipline on some of the routes that they had when they got big plays."

"Nobody's stopped them this year. We just wanted to make sure that we could try to slow them down, not give up the big plays, and play really good red zone defense and force them to kick field goals. That was really our game plan coming in, but we just weren't able to do that. We weren't able to get the stops that we needed to make, and then when we did get the stops that we needed to make, we couldn't make the plays."

"When you look at Boyd and Ellington and Hopkins and Watkins and Ford and those guys, they just have a lot of weapons and put a lot of pressure on you. I thought we had a good game plan going in. We just didn't execute it the way we needed to against the talent that they had."

ON QUARTERBACK SHAWN PETTY'S TURNOVER ISSUES:

"That's what's most frustrating. Shawn has been put into a difficult situation, no question about that. The one thing that we've tried to stress to him is, 'Just don't turn the ball over. Secure the ball.' He's got some bad habits that we haven't been able to get him out of in the time that we've worked with him as a quarterback — carrying the ball too low, not putting two hands on the ball when he goes in there. So that's something we've just got to continue to stress."

"If we don't turn it over, we can punt the ball and give them a longer field and be able to play better defense. Today, we gave them seven points on the fumble. That's what we've really got to try to get him to eliminate."

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